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when we consider that the value of iron for 1898 was 116.5 millions of dollars against 227 millions for all the other metallic products. Likewise 314 pages are given to the coal and coke industries but the value of the coal alone is 208 million dollars against 145 millions for all other non-metallic products. The total value of all the mineral products for 1898 is \$697,820,720 which is an increase over the preceding year of \$66,966,791 or 10.62 per cent.

Some of the more important special topics discussed are (1) the history of gold mining and metallurgy in the southern states by H. B. C. Nitze; (2) the characteristics, uses and domestic and foreign production of manganese ores by John Birkinbine; (3) the slate belt of Eastern New York and Western Vermont by T. Nelson Dale; (4) more than 100 pages of analyses and tests of building stones collected from various sources by Wm. C. Day and classified and arranged by states; (5) a brief reconnaissance of the Tennessee phosphate fields by C. Willard Hayes; (6) the mica deposits in the United States by J. A. Holmes; and (7) the mineral resources of Porto Rico by Robert T. Hill, and H. B. C. Nitze.

T. C. H.

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*Les Charbons Britanniques et Leur Épuisement.* By ED. LOZÉ.

Two volumes. Paris, 1900.

This work is an exhaustive treatise on British coals, comprising a discussion of their history, exploitation, production, consumption, geological occurrence, value, qualities, classification, utilities, and exportation. The work as whole is divided into four parts. Part one presents a general discussion of the geography and inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland; their social, political, and economic conditions; the influence of the coal industry on economics, navigation, naval power, and the national debt; the geology of the British Isles; the history of coal production and the statistics bearing on its production and consumption.

Part two furnishes a description of the coal beds of the United Kingdom and discusses their importance and productiveness. This is followed by a series of chapters on the industrial and commercial geography of the Islands, constituting the third part of the work. The fourth part treats of the productiveness of the coal mines, and the probable time of depletion.

It is thought probable that coal was first used in Britain by the early Bretons, but direct evidence of it is wanting. However, it is known to have been used by the Roman invaders, as cinders and coal ashes have been found in the ruins of the Roman houses. Not much is known of the coal industry from the time of the Roman invasion until the beginning of the thirteenth century when it is referred to in certain land grants. The first mines were located in the vicinity of Newcastle. By the year 1379 coal had become of sufficient importance to make it an object of impost. By the beginning of the sixteenth century the production had reached an average of a million tons per year, and the total production from that date to 1866 is estimated to be 850 million tons.

The principal coal beds of the United Kingdom occur in the Coal Measures or upper part of the Carboniferous series. According to Hull the Lower Carboniferous has a threefold division: (1) the lower schist group, (2) the Mountain limestone, and (3) the Yoredale group. The Upper Carboniferous is divided into (1) the Millstone grit, (2) the lower Coal Measures, (3) the middle Coal Measures, and (4) the upper Coal Measures. The last three divisions contain the productive coal beds. The work is accompanied by maps locating accurately the known coal areas and giving the probable extent of the undetermined ones.

The coals of Britain are classed under the heads of:

1. Lignites, containing 67 per cent. of carbon and 26 per cent. of oxygen.
2. Bituminous coal, containing 75 to 90 per cent. of carbon and 6 to 19 per cent. of oxygen.
3. Steam coal, a sort of semi-anthracite.
4. Cannel coal, containing 40 per cent. of volatile matter and being rich in hydrogen.
5. Anthracite coal, containing 93 to 95 per cent. of carbon and 3 per cent. of oxygen with 2 to 4 per cent. of hydrogen.

The total exportation of coal from the British Isles in 1898 was 35 million tons, which was a decrease over the preceding year of about 300,000 tons. The importation of coal for 1897 was only 9454 tons. The amount of coal consumed per capita in 1898 was 3.867 tons.

The author discusses the estimate made by the Commission of 1870, that the coal resources of the United Kingdom are 80 billion tons, and that at the present rate of depletion (2 million tons per year)

the total exhaustion will take place in four hundred years ; and arrives at the conclusion that the time may be even less than that given by the Commission. That the day of complete depletion will come, the author is assured, and when it does come "the historian of a powerful empire will terminate, very probably, the narrative of a remarkable epoch with these words, *finis Britannae*." W. N. LOGAN.

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*Cape Nome Gold Region.* By FRANK C. SCHRADER and ALFRED H. BROOKS. United States Geological Survey, Special Report, 56 pp. Washington, 1900.

The Cape Nome gold field which has recently occasioned so much excitement is of special interest geologically on account of being the most noteworthy modern beach placers known. The type of ore deposits to which these Alaskan beds belong has long been recognized, but no bodies of this kind have ever proved so rich. Ancient deposits of the same origin are not unknown. Such are the Witwatersrand blanket of the Transvaal and the Napoleon Creek conglomerate in Alaska.

The Nome district is on the southern shore of the Seward peninsula in a little known part of northwestern Alaska. "The beach rises gradually to a sharply cut bench, a hundred to two hundred yards from the surf. From the edge of this terrace, which is about twenty feet high, the moss-covered tundra extends inland, rising uniformly about two hundred feet in four or five miles, when it merges into the highland belt."

The bed-rock of the region is composed of limestones and phyllites or mica schists interbedded, with some gneiss. Igneous rock is of rare occurrence. Over this foundation lie the unconsolidated gravels with gold-bearing zones. The authors emphasize the fact that during the deposition of the gravels and sands the conditions were not materially different from those of today, except that the land stood at a lower elevation relatively to the sea. "There is no evidence whatever of glacial action in the region, and the popular idea that the gravels were brought to their present position by ice action is entirely erroneous."

The gold-bearing deposits are grouped into gulch-placers, bar-placers, beach-placers, tundra-placers, and bench-placers. The gulch and beach placers are the most productive. During the past year (1899) the production was three million dollars.

The gold is usually rounded and often smoothly polished. It is not evenly distributed through the gravels but gathered in zones. In